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President: Mr. Diogo Freitas do Amaral ..... (Portugal)

In the absence of the President, Mr. Kulla (Albania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

Agenda item 161 *(continued)*

Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development

Report of the Secretary-General (A/50/670)

Mr. Infante Villarreal (Colombia) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I have the honour to address the General Assembly on agenda item 161, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development". My delegation wishes to express its gratitude for the report of the Summit and for the report submitted by the Secretary-General on the item before us today.

The World Summit for Social Development, which was held in the city of Copenhagen last March, was a meeting of particular historic significance because, at the invitation of the United Nations and thanks to the warm welcome extended by the Government of Denmark, Heads of State and Government met for the first time in order to acknowledge the importance of social development and the well-being of humankind and to give the highest priority to those objectives in the light of the urgent need to solve severe social problems, in particular poverty, unemployment and social marginalization.

Clearly, this was a Summit of hope, commitment and action, as was expressed in the far-reaching Declaration and Programme of Action.

The Heads of State or Government declared that they would advocate a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision of social development based on human dignity, and they committed themselves to establishing a framework for action aimed, *inter alia*, at placing the human person at the centre of development and at orienting the economic system towards more effectively satisfying human needs. They also recognized the primary responsibility of States in achieving the goals of social development, as well as the need for international cooperation.

In addressing the General Assembly in September 1994, the President of Colombia, Ernesto Samper, spoke of the opportunity then presenting itself to resume the postponed task of building a new global system based on solidarity and the genuine quest for better living conditions for all. Thus, with the focus on the human

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person, poverty would be eradicated and social justice would be achieved. He expressed the need for a recommitment to people in order to prevent the social costs of economic changes from leading to the undoing of achievements made in the sphere of political consolidation. He proposed the need for an alternative development model which, as a model for the South, would have as its ultimate objective the creation of a new citizen — a more economically productive, more politically participatory and more socially committed citizen.

These are the principal guidelines followed by the Government of Colombia in the design and formulation of our development plan, which we refer to as the "social leap", whose purpose is to achieve the modernization of the productive structures of the country and to lend legitimacy to the new economic blueprint through genuine proposals for social development, based on the concepts of social solidarity and good governance.

We have designed an internal social-solidarity network, which is currently giving direct and specific support to the sectors of the population most vulnerable to poverty, such as mothers who are heads of household, elderly peasants in remote areas, young people and undernourished children.

The criteria, principles and objectives of the social-development plan pursued by the present Administration of my country fully coincide with those laid down by the Copenhagen Summit. Immediately after the conclusion of the Summit, the Colombian Government, as an initial step, circulated to all national entities related to the social sector the texts of the Declaration and Programme of Action, instructing them to give them priority consideration in the design, elaboration and implementation of their policies and programmes.

Next January, with the cooperation of the United Nations Development Programme and the Italian Government, a national meeting of those entities will take place in order to coordinate efficiently the implementation of, and provide timely follow-up to, the conclusions and commitments adopted by the Heads of State and the recommendations of the Programme of Action. In addition, an instructional presentation will be made to facilitate the implementation of the Copenhagen Programme of Action in the country.

At the regional level, Colombia has actively participated in the meetings convened by the Rio Group meeting of Ministers responsible for social development held in Buenos Aires on 4 and 5 May 1995, and the meeting of technical personnel in the social sphere held in Quito from 15 to 17 November.

At the Buenos Aires meeting, in addition to reaffirming the political will of the various Governments to fulfil the commitments of the Summit, we undertook, *inter alia*, to establish regional agreements to achieve national goals through the momentum of permanent mechanisms for horizontal cooperation.

Colombia welcomes the outcome of the Quito meeting. We welcome the Programme of Regional Cooperation for Social Development and the subprogrammes for Regional Technical Cooperation and Horizontal Cooperation. We wish to renew our firm determination to cooperate with the follow-up mechanism of the Regional Programme, and we fully agree with the set of recommendations formulated by the technical personnel in the social sphere on that occasion.

The United Nations is called upon to play a fundamental role in the follow-up to the implementation of the results of the Summit. The General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, each within its own mandates and competence, as well as the Commission for Social Development, will need to work in coordination in this regard. Expansion of the membership of the Commission and a greater frequency and duration of meetings have become necessary in the light of the new tasks the Commission must face as a result of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit: it must now play a central role in the periodic review of items related to the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

In this context, the Commission should also consider convening a meeting of high-level representatives in 1997 to study matters and policies related to social development.

The Bretton Woods institutions, for their part, should become more actively involved in the implementation of and follow-up to the Summit and, to that end, should step up their cooperation with other parts of the United Nations system.

The implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development calls for an integrated approach to social development and the promotion and strengthening of international cooperation. Colombia, aware that social development is the responsibility of each country, will continue to implement vigorous, decisive and wide-ranging policies that are consistent with the commitments it made at Copenhagen. This is the fruit of our profound conviction that we need to focus on the human being as the centre of development. The eradication of poverty, creation of productive employment, social integration and attention to the basic needs of society will remain the central thrust of our Government's action, with a view to achieving genuine social progress and improving the human condition, on the basis of full participation by all.

Mr. Muthaura (Kenya): My delegation wishes to address certain priority areas that require action in regard to the implementation of the outcome of the Copenhagen World Summit for Social Development.

Poverty continues to be the root cause of many ills in society, despite the high level of prosperity achieved by parts of the world community in the twentieth century. Appropriate actions are therefore required to address the effects of poverty, both in developing and developed countries. Poverty, which manifests itself in many ways, should be tackled in an integrated manner, as economic development and social progress are interrelated. The holding of the United Nations World Summit for Social Development in Copenhagen in March 1995 was a milestone in the realization that poverty, unemployment and social disintegration require an internationally coordinated strategy for their eradication and for the achievement of sustainable development.

We welcome the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit and, in particular, the commitment by world leaders to eradicate poverty worldwide through decisive national and international actions. This, together with the decisions taken at the related United Nations Conferences on the environment, population and women, have reinforced the resolve of the international community to combat poverty.

The eradication of poverty is primarily the responsibility of national Governments and, more importantly, depends on their ability to mobilize the grass-root involvement of communities in the initiation and execution of income-generating programmes. These efforts will, however, have limited impact without the support of the international community, as provided in Commitment 10 of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. Timely and effective actions by the international community and the United Nations are therefore crucial requirements.

It is encouraging to note in the report (A/50/670) of the Secretary-General that the Administrative Committee on Coordination, at its October 1995 session, considered necessary measures to be taken by the United Nations system. It is imperative that the United Nations provide effective and concerted support for national programmes consistent with the commitments and plans of action emanating from the Copenhagen Summit and the related United Nations conferences. To this end, we hope the inter-agency task forces that have been organized around the three interrelated themes — namely, first, the enabling environment for social and economic development, secondly, employment and sustainable livelihoods and, thirdly, basic social services for all — will provide the necessary impetus for programme implementation at the country level. We are also encouraged by the initiatives taken so far by the various bodies of the United Nations towards prioritization of poverty eradication in their programmes. We are looking forward to a healthy and enhanced complementarity

between national strategies and the priorities of the United Nations bodies and agencies.

Because of the importance we attach to national responsibility in poverty eradication, Kenya, in addition to implementing far-reaching macroeconomic adjustment programmes, has designed a package of short-term and long-term plans regarding social dimensions of development programmes that target the poor and other vulnerable groups. The programmes and projects currently under implementation encompass five major themes: welfare and basic services, skills development, employment and job creation, rural development and environmental conservation.

The welfare and basic-service programmes cover, among other things, immunization and the provision of essential drugs in health centres, nutritional support programmes for children under five years and for expectant and lactating mothers, urban-settlement upgrading programmes to improve living and working conditions in urban slums and skills development through technical training and educational support measures, including provision of textbooks and school bursaries for the poor. Employment creation is being supported by the development of the informal sector and micro-enterprises, as well as small-scale irrigation schemes, other land-reclamation projects and rural access roads. Environmental conservation is being addressed through various measures, including the development of fuel-efficient wood stoves, agroforestry and control of soil erosion.

To ensure successful implementation of these programmes, the Government has established committees from the grass root to the national level comprising Government officials and a wide representation of the local communities and non-governmental organizations and also open to donor-community representation.

While we agree that the national action programmes are fundamental, the implementation of the outcome of the Social Summit will not achieve the desired results without assured and substantial international support. We are concerned that donor resources for development support have been steadily declining in the past few years and the situation continues to worsen despite the commitments made during the Copenhagen Social Summit and other related recent United Nations conferences. Political will and the honouring of international commitments would greatly enhance the mobilization of additional resources to facilitate the achievement of the consensus goals on the reduction and elimination of poverty and the promotion of productive employment.

Mr. Wang (China) *(interpretation from Chinese)*: The World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in March this year is an important conference of pioneering significance in the field of social development in the history of the United Nations. At the conference, leaders of all countries made solemn commitments on the eradication of poverty, expansion of productive employment and enhancement of social integration, which are fundamental issues bearing on the social development of all countries. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted at the conference offer a number of recommendations and proposals to address these issues. Now the task facing us is to carry out in real earnest the follow-up to the Summit.

The Secretary-General, in his report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, laid down the basic framework for the work of the whole United Nations system, and put forward some recommendations on the implementation and coordination of follow-up actions by various bodies, such as that the follow-up should be innovative and lead to practical results; that the situation of the developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, should be taken into full account; that funds should be mobilized through various channels; and that there should be an integrated follow-up to the Cairo, Copenhagen and Beijing conferences to mount a concerted attack on poverty. We appreciate these recommendations.

We are of the view that the following should be particularly emphasized in the follow-up to the Summit:

First, a favourable environment of peace should be created. President Jiang Zemin of China made this very

good point on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations:

> "Peace is the primary necessity of the world's people. Without peace, there can be no development to speak of".

I believe that this opinion is shared by all the people in the world. All countries should cherish peace and redouble their efforts to maintain international peace.

Second, economic development and all-round social progress should be vigorously promoted. Eradication of poverty, expansion of employment and enhancement of social integration are the three core issues of the Summit. There are now still more than 1 billion people living in poverty in the world, which is seriously hampering social development and progress. The international community and the Governments of all countries should take measures to eradicate poverty and promote economic development. In this process, attention should be given to balanced development of education, culture, social security and health care as well as the rational use of resources so as to ensure comprehensive and sustainable social development.

Third, the national conditions of each country should be respected and we must ensure that the road to development of each country is chosen independently by its own people. No country has exactly the same national conditions and levels of development as another country. The people of each country have the right to choose their road of development and work out their development programmes and priorities in the light of their national conditions. No country should impose its ideology and development models on other countries.

Fourth, international cooperation should be vigorously expanded on the basis of mutual benefit for common development. Each country has its own strong points and advantages. It is therefore undesirable either to underestimate or overestimate one's capabilities. Effective international cooperation should be engaged in to learn from each other's strong points and make up each other's deficiencies, thus promoting common development.

Fifth, social development should be promoted on a global scale, and the developed countries should take greater responsibilities for this. At present, there is a huge gap between the developing and the developed countries in terms of wealth. The developed countries enjoy advantages in terms of capital, technology and trade. In order to promote social development and progress on a global scale, the developed countries should adopt measures in terms of capital, technology transfer, reduction and remission of debt, and trade in support of the developing countries and should set a clear timetable to this end. The developed countries should increase rather than reduce their assistance to the developing countries. Helping the developing countries overcome poverty and promote their development will eventually facilitate the further development of the developed countries.

Sixth, the United Nations system should play a greater role in promoting the effective implementation of the follow-up. Since the Summit, the United Nations system has done some useful work in implementing the follow-up to it. We are of the view that in this process its role should be further strengthened. The United Nations should implement the follow-up and promote the social development of Member States by increasing resources and strengthening mechanisms. The General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development should place the implementation of the follow-up at the top of their agenda so that constant assessments can be made to ensure timely improvement. At the same time, efforts should be made to ensure sound coordination in the implementation of the follow-up by the whole United Nations system so as to give full play to the potential and role of all bodies in this regard.

The Chinese Government attaches great importance to social development. It actively supported and participated in the Summit as well as the preparatory work, and will work hard to implement the follow-up to the Summit. In his letter of reply to the Secretary-General on 20 October 1995, Premier Li Peng of the State Council of China designated China's focal point with the Secretariat and pointed out that United

Nations activities pertaining to social development should persevere in the direction set forth at the Summit.

The Chinese Government is now formulating and will implement the ninth Five-Year Plan for national economic and social development and the Social Development Plan from 1996 to 2010. In recent years, China has made remarkable progress in promoting economic development and social progress. Particularly in eradicating poverty, China has launched a large-scale poverty-relief campaign in a planned and organized manner throughout the country, greatly increased capital input and formulated preferential policies to this end, which has helped further reduce the poverty-stricken population in the country. We are determined to eradicate absolute poverty throughout China by the end of this century. In spite of the difficulties in the field of social development, the Chinese Government is determined to achieve the objectives set forth at the Summit. While further promoting our own social development, we are ready to make contributions to global social development and a future of prosperity and happiness for all mankind.

Mr. Mabilangan (Philippines): I am speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. The 1990s have ushered in a new and perceptive interest in social development, brought about, no doubt, by the sweeping changes in the world ethno-social and political situation, and abetted in no small measure by environmental concerns. Unrelenting poverty, especially among debt-strapped developing countries; persistent and widespread unemployment; exploding population growth; an alarmingly depleted physical environment; a growing technological and economic gap between the developed countries and the poorer countries of the third world — all these and more have engendered a sense of insecurity and uncertainty leading to a re-examination of both material and moral values.

As we approach the end of the millennium, we begin to see the dawning of a new era and the withering away of the old order. There is a global realization that, in spite of all the changes occurring in the world today, the needs of people have become a priority issue and have thus placed the human person in the centre of development, becoming both the *raison d'etre* and the beneficiary.

Underpinning this approach is the right to development, which is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized. The equality of opportunity for development is a prerogative of all nations, rich and poor, and of individuals who make up these nations.

The debate in the United Nations has focused on national development as a prerequisite to peace. And quite rightly so, for when people are driven to desperation by want and misery, they will brook no hindrance to the satisfaction of their basic human needs. Unrelenting poverty is the most serious problem facing humankind today. For developing countries, it is aggravated by their debt burden, widespread unemployment, a deepening environmental crisis, the lack of adequate international aid and trade deterioration due to protectionism. Of the more than 5.6 billion people on this planet, more than 1.3 billion, or one fifth, are considered absolutely poor. According to a recent report of the World Bank, these are people, so limited by malnutrition, illiteracy, disease, squalid surroundings, high infant mortality and low life expectancy as to be beneath any reasonable definition of human decency. We strongly believe that international cooperation is essential to the easing of poverty. We reiterate the need for the international community, including the international financial institutions, to continue exploring ways of implementing additional and innovative measures to alleviate substantially the debt burdens of developing countries, in particular of the highly indebted, low-income countries. The mobilization of new and additional financial resources that are both adequate and predictable are also needed in order to implement the commitments made in Copenhagen towards the eradication of poverty through sustained economic growth and sustainable development.

Towards this end, we should strive to fulfil the agreed target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product for official development assistance (ODA) and 0.15 per cent to the least developed countries as soon as possible and increase the share of funding for social development programmes commensurate with the scope and scale of activities required to achieve the objectives and goals of the Declaration on Social Development and Programme of Action. We reiterate the need for a mutual understanding between developed and developing country partners to allocate 20 per cent of ODA and 20 per cent of the national budget, respectively, to basic social programmes. In our efforts towards the eradication of poverty, priority should be given to Africa, the low-income countries in Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean and the least developed countries. We must, however, obviate the adverse effects of structural adjustment through a troika of social development goals: eradication of poverty; the generation of productive employment; and the enhancement of social integration. However, as many countries, and the United Nations itself, have realized, economic development by itself is not enough. Raising the income of the nation in general is not enough. A larger gross national product does not necessarily mean a better life for the individual citizen. A bigger economy by itself does not satisfy the individual person's aspirations for human fulfilment.

Indeed, economic growth cannot be sustained for long unless the individual citizen and the individual community have a stake in that growth and unless they are mobilized and empowered to take an active part in the process of development. For this to materialize, the social backbone and foundation of the common person and, in a larger sense, the community, must be strongly fortified with a solid base. Economic growth would be meaningless to the individual who does not share in its benefits or whose community is destroyed by it. Development would be empty for a person who is deprived of his individual rights and freedoms. A society cannot find fulfilment in growth — indeed the development process itself is severely hampered — if it does not take adequate care of its vulnerable groups: women, migrant workers, children, indigenous groups, the disabled, displaced persons and refugees. Development cannot be sustained unless the nurturing qualities of the natural environment are conserved for future generations.

Care for the citizen's fulfilment as a human being, for his community and the totality of society cannot wait. It cannot wait for total peace to be achieved or for a certain level of development to be attained. All this — peace, development and the improvement of the quality of society and human life — must proceed simultaneously.

Targets should be realistic in the areas where qualitative data could be obtained, specifically in the areas of poverty and unemployment. A clear correlation between these targets and commitments undertaken, both nationally and internationally, would facilitate a review of the follow-up. To promote nationally and internationally a favourable political and legal environment for social development, there must be transparency and accountability in international economic and political decision-making; respect for all human rights and democratic principles, pluralism and international law, as well as realization of the right to development through the implementation of the Declaration on the Right to Development.

Development is not just an individual prerogative. It is a right that accrues equally to both individuals and nations.

Some of these aspects were adequately addressed during the World Summit for Social Development, in Copenhagen, which produced a comprehensive and concrete Programme of Action to ensure that the problems being faced by the world today will not spill over into the next century or that there will at least be an improvement by the early part of that era. We call upon States to fulfil the commitments of the Heads of State and Government to a political, economic, ethical and spiritual vision for social development based on human dignity, human rights, equality, respect, peace, democracy, mutual responsibility, cooperation and full respect for the various religious and ethical values and cultural backgrounds of peoples.

It is in this regard that the Group of 77 and China welcome with great enthusiasm the draft resolution on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. In reaffirming the need for an integrated and coordinated follow-up to Copenhagen, the Group of 77 and China look to the focal, functional role of the Commission for Social Development, with overall guidance and monitoring by the Economic and Social Council.

In this respect, we welcome the adoption of a 1996 substantive theme for the Commission for Social Development that hinges on the eradication of poverty through the formulation of integrated strategies and actions to meet the basic human needs of all and to promote self-reliance and community-based initiatives. The Commission is a logical actor in the implementation and follow-up of Social Summit commitments. In this regard, we appeal to the Member States to strengthen the Commission in order to ensure the proper and appropriate implementation of Summit commitments.

Finally, on behalf of the Group of 77 and China and of the Philippine Government, I wish to reiterate our profound appreciation and gratitude to the Government of Denmark for hosting the World Summit for Social Development.

Mr. Mongbe (Benin) (*interpretation from French*): The delegation of Benin is not simply bowing to tradition by joining previous speakers in paying a friendly and well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Juan Somavía of Chile, the Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and the Main Committee of the World Summit for Social Development, held last March in Copenhagen, the lovely capital of Denmark.

I take this opportunity to renew my delegation's sincere congratulations to the people and Government of Denmark on the warm hospitality with which they welcomed representatives to Copenhagen and the high-quality organization of work, which led to a successful outcome.

As the head of the Benin delegation to the Copenhagen Summit stated,

> "At the end of the twentieth century, the challenges facing our societies in the North and the South, in the developed and the developing countries alike, challenges which are causing the deepest concern are: environmental degradation, the high rate of unemployment, increased numbers of poor, the breakdown of social structures and the growth of violence and insecurity."

He went on to say, following a line which, happily, that historic meeting eventually took:

> "Our concerns, which we be share, but which differ in their intensity, call for a new form of international cooperation, a genuine partnership, a new compact of solidarity to struggle against poverty, create productive jobs, reduce unemployment or under-employment and strengthen social integration."

My delegation believes that the Copenhagen Summit has a historic significance, since it was the first time a meeting at such a high level and on the global scale had mobilized and focused international opinion and that of the world's leaders on a vital question — the struggle against poverty and social exclusion — and taken decisions designed to promote social progress and justice and to improve conditions of life.

Copenhagen made it clear that, while it celebrates the triumph of the democratic system, the international community is witnessing the spread — like an epidemic — of the scourges of poverty, unemployment and social disintegration. The essential struggle against these scourges requires heightened cooperation in support of national strategies. The fundamental consensus to which my delegation attaches great importance, is that the success of the chosen strategies will depend on the premise that the human individual is at the centre of social and economic development. It will be understood that the corollary is the elimination of poverty, which in turn depends on economic growth and States adopting

policies based on a readiness to ensure a better distribution of wealth.

Another important achievement of the World Summit for Social Development was the reaffirmation of the right to development, which had only recently been defined in the Vienna Declaration on human rights. This right must henceforth be considered a basic right, without which the others are mere illusions.

Investment in social development is extremely expensive. In order to meet their Copenhagen commitments, the developing countries, while making their own efforts, cannot do without the financial support of the developed world. This support must come in many forms, including the reduction — or even cancellation — of their foreign debt and an increase in official development assistance, which means that the developed countries must keep their promise to devote at least 0.7 per cent of their gross national product to official development assistance. It must be acknowledged that four of them — Norway, Sweden, Denmark and the Netherlands — have done so, and that France is close to the target.

In addition, there must be effective implementation of the 20:20 compact whereby the developed countries and the developing countries concerned would devote their efforts to developing basic social services; the national capacities of the developing countries must be strengthened; the products of the developing countries, and particularly of the least-developed countries must have better access to the markets of the developed countries; an appropriate programme must be developed to improve awareness in the scientific and technological community; technology must be transferred to the developing countries in the best possible conditions, as an essential element in the search for sustainable development in those countries; equity and equality between men and women as they participate in development must be respected; and education and culture for all — for women in particular — must be promoted.

These, in summary; are the main commitments that our Heads of State and Government entered into and the actions that they advocated at their historic meeting in Copenhagen. Now we must move from the stage of reflection and concepts to the implementation of commitments, as the follow-up to our decisions, and to evaluation of their results in an integrated approach, at both the national and the international levels.

It is not possible for States to do everything on their own. Local-development community associations, non-governmental organizations, civil society in general and the private sector must demonstrate independence and initiative in thought and in action. Likewise, more resources, by way of financial support and international assistance, must be devoted to developing countries, particularly the African and the least developed countries, as is rightly stressed in Commitment 7 of the Copenhagen Declaration.

The United Nations, which is an appropriate forum for discussion and implementation of projects, must adapt itself to change so that it may become a launching-pad for projects of international scope in the field of social development. It is on the basis of this kind of thinking that Commitment 10 stresses the need to strengthen the structure, resources and procedures of the Economic and Social Council and its subsidiary organs. The competent functional commissions have a primary role to play in examining and evaluating the results of the Summit. This job must be done by the Economic and Social Council, and the conclusions must be submitted to the General Assembly.

It is important to recall that, in chapter V, the Programme of Action says that the Economic and Social Council

> "should be invited to review the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development, including considerations of the strengthening of the Commission, taking into account the need for synergy with other related commissions and conference follow-up" *(A/CONF.166/9, annex II, chap. V, p. 87, para. 95 (f))*.

My delegation notes with satisfaction that several initiatives aimed at promoting greater participation by the

private sector and the representatives of civil society at sessions of the Commission for Social Development are under consideration and may be implemented at the special session in 1996, on the recommendation of the Economic and Social Council. Such initiatives help to strengthen that subsidiary organ, which is well equipped to ensure follow-up to the Summit for Social Development.

While stressing the irreplaceable follow-up role of the Commission for Social Development, the Summit also recognized the specific role of the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in the follow-up with respect to appropriate aspects of the Declaration and Programme of Action, as is stressed in chapter V of the Programme of Action.

On behalf of my delegation, I welcome the various initiatives undertaken through the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund, all of which are designed to help developing countries to adopt effective measures for the elimination of poverty.

It would be unfair not to mention other organs and programmes — in particular, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements and the United Nations Environment Programme — that are also involved in the initiation of activities that will help to translate into action the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action, as is emphasized in the Secretary-General's report (A/50/670).

International financial institutions should take account of the social consequences for developing countries — particularly the most vulnerable of them — of the fiscal policies of structural adjustment programmes. Indeed, what would be our countries' chances of overcoming the problems of poverty, unemployment — including the absence of jobs for young graduates — and social disintegration without appreciable support from external resources and without effective coordination of international action through the United Nations system, including the Bretton Woods institutions?

The Secretary-General's report describes the action begun by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund in the struggle against poverty and the activities of the International Labour Organization, which proposes to help Governments and social partners in formulating national strategies aimed at achieving full employment and creating high-quality jobs.

All of this, together with the activities that are about to be launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the World Health Organization, form the framework of the follow-up to the Copenhagen Summit and will contribute to the elimination of poverty.

The three United Nations Headquarters departments dealing with the economic and social sectors have a technical-support and coordinating role to play to enhance the effectiveness of the action of the competent intergovernmental organs: the Commission for Social Development, the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly.

To that end, the delegation of Benin reaffirms its support for the following recommendations, among others, of the Summit: that the General Assembly should hold a special session in the year 2000 to review and appraise implementation of the outcome of the Summit; that the General Assembly should include in its agenda each year, beginning in 1995, the question of the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development; that in 1996 the General Assembly should review the effectiveness of the steps taken within the framework of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty; that the General Assembly at its fiftieth session — its current session — should declare the first United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty.

My delegation views the Copenhagen Summit as the cornerstone of international consensus on the multidimensional nature of social development. Its outcome must be taken into account in the elaboration, now under way, of the Agenda for Development. The

same applies to the consensus achieved at other, similar, meetings under the auspices of the United Nations.

It would be a pity if the hopes, born at Copenhagen, of turning economic growth into a means of increasing the well-being of all — in particular, women, children, young people, the disabled and other vulnerable, disadvantaged and marginal groups — were to sink in interminable debates at our meetings or in unproductive studies of the administrative structures of our Organization.

It is high time to move to coordinated action. It is necessary to build on solid foundations a new society in which everybody, rich and poor, and developed and developing countries can get down to implementing the Programme of Action of the World Summit for Social Development — in other words, to following the strategies that have been designed to deal successfully with the great problems besetting mankind: first and foremost, underemployment, exclusion and social disintegration.

Before concluding my statement, I should like to say a few words about Benin's efforts in the field of social development through the implacable struggle against the hideous scourge of poverty. For years now — especially since 1990 — the Government of Benin has been progressively putting a coherent policy of social development in place by devoting 30 to 40 per cent of the national budget to social sectors. Benin supports the view that all strata of society should have access to essential social services. This implies the necessity of devoting new resources to the financing of such a policy.

Antoine de Saint-Exupéry said:

"Nothing that concerns man can be counted or measured."

That is why, with a view to financing the Programme of Action, Benin deemed it beneficial and necessary to set up, even before the Summit was held, its Fund for Support of Social Action and its National Fund of Solidarity for Employment.

Other actions corresponding to national commitments in the framework of the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action are currently being devised. They will help Benin to win its bid for the elimination of poverty and the creation of productive employment, with a view to securing full employment and social integration.

Mr. Sengwe (Zimbabwe): My delegation is pleased that the Assembly is responding to the call from the Copenhagen Summit to place the outcome of that historic meeting high on the agenda of the international community.

I also wish to thank the Secretary-General for his most enlightening report, "Implementation of the Outcome of the World Summit for Social Development" (A/50/670).

We met at Copenhagen impelled by the need to alleviate human suffering. There, we all heard the heart-rending chronicles of facts and figures that depicted the wretchedness and unhappiness of an unacceptably high percentage of the human race. For this generation, which has known and experienced unprecedented affluence, it is most disquieting to try and live with the fact that a whole 20 per cent of the world's population today lives in abject poverty. It comes as no surprise, therefore, that the source of conflicts, armed or unarmed, has shifted towards economic, social and environmental issues, with more conflicts now arising within States than between or among them. The Summit at Copenhagen was an acknowledgement that social disintegration could be contained only by focusing on the human being and the eradication of poverty.

The core issues of the Social Summit — poverty alleviation, employment generation and social integration — should continue to be our main focus in the implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. Implementation should take a holistic approach. Meaningful and sustainable social development cannot be achieved by implementing sector policies independently. The success of the Copenhagen Commitments will require the joint effort of Governments

and grassroots and non-governmental organizations working in partnership towards that same objective.

Zimbabwe realizes that the implementation of the goals of the Social Summit is first and foremost a national responsibility and a priority. For us in Zimbabwe, the post-independence era has been marked by a rapid expansion in the provision of basic social services, particularly health, health care and education facilities, to all. Furthermore, we have striven to promote social integration by establishing country-wide administrative structures in order to achieve grassroots participation and to widen the decision-making base. With over 70 per cent of the population living on the land, the Government embarked on a phased resettlement programme based on land acquisition and redistribution to improve the peasant's and rural farmer's access to productive land and reduce overuse of land resources, thus protecting the environment.

In order to address the plight of the vulnerable groups — especially women, who constitute 50 per cent of the population — the Government continues to pay particular attention to the enhancement of the status of women. Several laws have been passed to ensure that women have equal access to the country's resources. In line with the Beijing Declaration and Programme of Action, the Government of Zimbabwe is also working on inheritance laws to ensure that women are treated as equals. In Zimbabwe we believe that the Summit Programme of Action cannot be implemented without paying particular attention to the role and contribution of women to social progress.

The Zimbabwe Government recently launched a poverty alleviation action programme, which not only includes the present public-assistance programme but also seeks to concentrate its efforts on the total eradication of the root causes of poverty in our society. We are, however, appealing to the international community to complement our efforts. Since economic and social development are inextricably linked, we have embarked on an economic reform programme, removing all the controls that were hampering economic performance and liberalizing the market to bring about competition and expand the productive base.

The fistful of measures being taken by the Government of Zimbabwe classically typify the courageous steps being taken by developing countries to try to improve their lot. Our national Governments, private sectors and other social sectors are pooling their resources in order to strengthen our national capacities for social development. Without trivializing the importance and impact of these domestic and sometimes subregional measures, we wish to make a clarion call to the international community to help create an enabling international environment.

The debt crisis, falling terms of trade for commodities, high tariffs for finished products, the harmful social effects of structural-adjustment programmes, and lack of resources and appropriate technology all constitute crushing burdens which, if not removed, will negate all our efforts to implement the Copenhagen Programme of Action. Substantial debt reduction is required to enable developing countries to implement the Summit goals. The Bretton Woods institutions, whose diagnoses and prescriptions have never been people-oriented, should explore ways of implementing additional measures to alleviate the debt burden of developing countries, especially those in sub-Saharan Africa. The Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action called upon the General Assembly to, *inter alia*, promote and strengthen the coordination of the United Nations system, the Bretton Woods institutions and the World Trade Organization at all levels with a view to ensuring the coherence of the activities of these entities.

The Copenhagen Summit also called upon the General Assembly to keep social development high on the agenda of the international community. Whilst we appreciate the fact that this very important subject has already found its way onto the agenda of this Assembly, we are disappointed that crucial departments and units within the United Nations system have not yet geared themselves to take appropriate action. Indeed, we note with great concern that departments such as the Department of Public Information and the Department for Development Support and Management Services, which are supposed to promote international awareness,

mobilize resources and assist national Governments in capacity-building, are actually threatened with trimmed allocations in the proposed programme budget for the 1996-1997 biennium.

Following the recent global conferences, it is imperative that the United Nations system gear itself to spearhead and coordinate the international community's follow-up activities. In our view, the mandate of the Commission for Social Development has to be broadened and strengthened in order to monitor the implementation of the Programme of Action. By addressing issues of unemployment and poverty, the international community would be facilitating the maintenance of peace and security within and among States.

In the ongoing exercise to reform and strengthen the United Nations system, it is imperative that we take into account the obligations we placed on the Organization at the recent global conferences. The reform process should not simply beautify the Organization and its structures at the expense of the poor of the world.

In Copenhagen, interested developing and developed countries were called upon to implement the "20/20 compact". Zimbabwe regards the implementation of this compact as crucial to the success of the Programme of Action. The realization of the vision of the 20/20 initiative and of the goals it stands for could help end the worst physical manifestations of poverty and contribute to defusing the social time-bomb threatening world security.

Poverty transcends boundaries and knows no immigration laws. Social disintegration cannot be indefinitely contained within isolated suburbs, ghettos or national borders. It is therefore necessary for the international community to assist developing counties in setting up basic infrastructure for the provision of social services. We believe that it is the greatest tragedy of our time that exceedingly high levels of affluence within and among our societies exist side by side with abject poverty. We do not share the perception that development is a zero-sum game in which the success of the North can be achieved only at the expense of the South or that the progress and happiness of one part of humanity can be possible only when the other part is socially and economically deprived.

We believe that social development will be meaningful and durable if it involves people from all spheres. Let us not allow the lofty goals of the social Summit to become meaningless to the world's poor. By the year 2000, when we assess our progress, we must not find ourselves guilty of having worsened the situation of the world's poor. Copenhagen must be the beginning, not the end.

Mr. Khryshov (Russian Federation) (*interpretation from Russian*): It is symbolic that the World Summit for Social Development was held in the golden jubilee year of the United Nations, our universal organization, one of whose primary purposes as stated in the preamble to the Charter is to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

Now that the cold war is history, there is a unique opportunity for constructive interaction among States to solve such critical problems as social problems. As we pursue the path of cooperation, we become increasingly convinced that the domestic social problems of any country can spill over national borders and have grave negative effects on the world situation, slowing the progress of mankind.

That is why Russia actively supported the convening of the World Summit for Social Development at Copenhagen and why we believe that the results of the Summit can and must give a mighty impetus to the development of international cooperation in the social field. The main task before us today is to ensure the implementation of the final documents of the Summit — the Declaration and Programme of Action — so that the decisions of the conference will not turn out to be nothing more than good intentions expressed on paper. In that connection, we believe that the Summit documents are on the whole sufficiently specific and well balanced, and that they reflect the interests of all groups of States, including those with economies in transition.

Mr. Kulla (Albania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

As the Declaration notes, social development and social justice are essential for the maintenance of peace and security within States and in relations between them. By the same token, social development and social justice cannot be achieved in the absence of peace and security and respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. This most important interdependence was recognized 50 years ago in the United Nations Charter; since then it has lost none of its timeliness, but has rather become more evident.

I wish to turn to some of the social problems whose solution depends on measures at the national level. Having undertaken radical political and economic reforms affecting millions of people, Russia continues to attach primary importance to the solution of social problems through finding resources and ways and means to ensure respect for fundamental social rights. A Commission on questions relating to women, the family and demographics has been established in the office of the President of the Russian Federation, and the Parliament has committees on social policy, labour, social assistance and the problems of women, the family and young people, which are preparing standards for national policy in these areas. With the participation of representatives of the constituent parts of the Federation, the Government of the Russian Federation has established an interdepartmental council on questions relating to social development. Our Government has decided to create a national body tasked with contributing to the implementation in Russia of the objectives of the Declaration and Programme of Action. We call on all States to cooperate in the solution of social problems.

At these initial stages in our reforms, the most urgent tasks are to prevent massive unemployment and to support socially unprotected segments of the population and help them adapt to market conditions.

The first signs of economic recovery and stabilization in Russia are already apparent. The task of structural reform is now in the forefront. An intensive process of privatization is under way, and the market economy is growing increasingly visible in Russia. It is clear that the success of democratic reforms in countries that have embarked on a process of political, economic and social reform will determine not only their own future, but the face of the world community of the twenty-first century.

More energetic action by the international community to support the countries with transitional economies and their integration into the world market could really speed up the global processes of democratic change. Increased attention by the United Nations to the problems of countries with transitional economies would be fully in keeping with the realities of our day.

With a view to the solution of these problems, United Nations activities must also become more focused and more dynamic so as to translate the decisions of the Summit for Social Development into concrete action. The United Nations must be the central organ of the international community for the taking of decisions aimed not only at the maintenance of peace and international security, but also at the solution of problems of social security.

The Commission for Social Development, to our way of thinking, must play an important role in the implementation of the decisions taken at the Summit, and to that end it must be supported in every way. However, all changes in the mandate and terms of reference of the Commission must take into account available budget appropriations and must be achieved through the reallocation of existing resources.

We believe the United Nations specialized agencies should speed up the designing of concrete programmes, in accordance with the decisions of the Copenhagen Summit and based on the Declaration and Programme of Action, and that their implementation should be initiated without delay.

Not all questions linked to social problems must necessarily be considered at United Nations Headquarters. We believe that many regional organizations can play a key role in the social field if their activities are coordinated by the United Nations. The growing number and increasingly varied range of problems insistently call for the United Nations

Secretariat to become more effective in this field of activity.

Our delegation fully supports United Nations activities designed to strengthen the monitoring of the implementation of international plans and programmes of action and, in particular, the aims and tasks of social development reflected in the International Development Strategy for the Fourth United Nations Development Decade, in the guiding principles of social-security policies and programmes intended to develop in the immediate future the guiding principles for the further planning and implementation of measures relating to young people, and in the International Plan of Action for the problems of aging, the World Programme of Action concerning Disabled Persons, the United Nations Decade of Disabled Persons and the standard rules for securing equal opportunities for the disabled.

In conclusion, I should like to stress once again that the Russian Federation supports the strengthening of the social dimension of international cooperation, with the leading role played by the United Nations, so as to give priority to the social problems within United Nations activities. We are ready to cooperate more with all countries to that end.

Mr. Maruyama (Japan): This year, which marks the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, has been an epoch-making one in the field of social development, as the recent Summit meeting succeeded in securing the commitments of Heads of State and Government to work towards the well-being of all people as a matter of the highest priority. I should like to pay special tribute to the Government and the people of Denmark for having hosted that Summit and bringing it to a truly successful conclusion. I should also like to express our deep appreciation to Ambassador Somavía, Chairman of the Preparatory Committee, the staff of the United Nations Secretariat and everyone else who participated in the Summit for their contributions.

In a world plagued by recurrent regional conflicts, poverty and social instability, it is imperative that the international community, working primarily through the United Nations, continue to make efforts to resolve these problems. Now that the pattern of North-South confrontation, which was a by-product of the cold war, is changing, we have a valuable opportunity to deal effectively with social problems that threaten the well-being of people in developed and developing countries alike. The fact that this opportunity was seized at the World Summit for Social Development is of historic importance.

The commitments that were made at the Summit must now be translated into action. Although those who participated in it agreed that the main responsibility for implementation of the policies, actions, and measures contained in the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action rests with national Governments, it is also important to strengthen international cooperation, especially through the organizations of the United Nations and other multilateral institutions, in order to aid those national efforts. I wish now to turn to the role of the United Nations in implementing and following up the Summit at the intergovernmental level, a task that will be entrusted to a three-tiered mechanism consisting of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development.

The role that the Economic and Social Council will play is of critical importance, particularly in the area of coordination. In recent years, the United Nations has organized a series of major international conferences, and while each has had its own theme, there have also been issues of common concern. The United Nations system must, therefore, take an integrated and coordinated approach in following up these major international conferences, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions. To that end, the Council should ensure that the agendas and work programmes of the functional commissions are harmonized and coordinated.

The second point I would like to make is that follow-up requires close coordination among the relevant organizations of the United Nations system and with the Bretton Woods institutions, since the theme of the Summit has both social and development aspects, as was evident when issues such as structural-adjustment

programmes were discussed. The Council has a critical role to play in ensuring such coordination.

The Commission for Social Development has the central role in following up the outcome of the Summit. Its mandate in the area of social policy is broad. It includes advising the Economic and Social Council on general social issues, but particularly on all matters not covered by specialized intergovernmental agencies, on practical measures that may be needed and on measures needed for the coordination of activities in this field. The Commission is therefore fully able, in the view of my delegation, to perform the roles it is expected to perform in following up the Summit. The issue before us, then, is not how its mandate should be changed but how to revitalize the activities it is carrying out under its current mandate, and the solution, in our view, is to establish more effective working methods and to formulate more focused agendas. It is also necessary for each Member State to nominate representatives who have experience and expertise in various areas of social development.

The General Assembly is likewise expected to play an important role in formulating policy and in guiding the implementation of the outcome of the Summit. We should establish an organized system that will enable it to tackle this issue vigorously — for example, by allocating it to a joint meeting of the Second and Third Committees held before the plenary session.

Supplementing the efforts of the three main bodies I have just mentioned, the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) is responsible for promoting systemwide coordination among the organizations of the United Nations system. It is therefore encouraging that ACC, in recognition of the importance of having the United Nations system follow up the recent global conferences, concurred with the proposal that coordinated support for country-level action be organized, in the first instance, around three interrelated themes: an enabling environment for social and economic development; employment and sustainable livelihood; and basic social services for all. In addition, the coordination of efforts to implement the outcome of the Summit at the country level should be pursued through the resident coordinator system.

The last point I wish to make relates to the role of non-governmental organizations. As was recognized at the Summit, social development cannot be achieved by government alone but requires the active participation of civil society as a whole, including the non-governmental organizations. Although these organizations have been making an important contribution in this area, principally by alerting the world to problems and then providing information on the implications of the possible policies that might be pursued to resolve them, my delegation believes that it is high time for the non-governmental organizations to participate more actively in the process of making decisions on such policies. An effective partnership must be formed between government and the main actors in civil society, including these organizations, in order to implement and follow up properly the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Summit. In working towards that end, in my own country, the non-governmental organization Forum of Japan on Social Development was established to follow up the Summit.

In concluding my statement, I wish to reiterate the importance of translating the commitments made at the Summit into concrete action. As Prime Minister Murayama announced in Copenhagen, Japan will continue to give priority to people-centred social development in its official development assistance activities, while working towards the common goal of fully implementing the Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Summit, in cooperation with like-minded countries, the United Nations system, and other concerned international organizations.

Mr. Kazunda (Zambia): It is an honour for me to speak on agenda item 161, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development".

By deciding to convene the World Summit for Social Development at the level of Heads of State and Government, the United Nations was clearly manifesting the importance that the Organization attaches to the issue of social development. The response by an unprecedented

number of Heads of State and Government to the invitation of the Secretary-General to attend the Summit is in turn a sign that world leaders are aware of how deep the crisis of social development has become.

I wish to recall that at the Summit, almost all the Heads of State and Government referred to the sense of pessimism and hopelessness around the world. The complex arena of problems discussed ranged from ethnic and religious violence to massive displacements of people; and from unemployment, poverty and crime to xenophobia and racial and gender discrimination.

The Summit recognized that while there has been progress in some areas of social and economic development, far too many people, particularly women and children, are vulnerable to stress and deprivation. Poverty, unemployment and social disintegration too often result in isolation, marginalization and violence. The insecurity that many people face about the future — their own and that of their children — is intensifying.

The Summit also recognized that within many societies, in both developed and developing countries, the gap between rich and poor has increased. Furthermore, despite the fact that some developing countries are growing rapidly, the gap between developed and many developing countries, particularly the least developed countries, has widened.

More than one billion people in the world live in abject poverty, and most of these go hungry every day. A large proportion, the majority of whom are women, have very limited access to income, resources, education, health care and nutrition, particularly in Africa and the least developed countries.

The economic and social marginalization of the poorest nations, and of the poorest within communities, continues unabated. For instance, in the past 10 years alone, falling commodity prices, rising military expenditures, poor or nil returns on investment, the debt crisis and some negative aspects of structural adjustment programmes have reduced the real incomes of most developing countries, particularly in Africa and the least developed countries. This situation has been accompanied by cuts in essential social services, which, in some instances, has meant health centres without drugs or doctors and schools without books or teachers.

For many millions of families in the poorest villages and for urban squatters, the consequences of these economic forces, over which they have absolutely no control, are destitution and desperation. The inevitable result has, of course, been social disintegration, ethnic tensions and political turbulence, such as we are experiencing in many parts of the world today. We are therefore gratified that the Summit, in one of its commitments, undertook to accelerate the economic, social and human-resource development of Africa and the least developed countries.

It is certainly not my intention to remind the General Assembly of the very grim picture painted of the world at Copenhagen. My intention was merely to bring to the fore the realities of the problems that the world community is confronted with, so that as we discuss the follow-up to this very important Conference, we do not lose sight of the overriding need not only to act, but to act expeditiously.

In discussing the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, my delegation is of the opinion that this will have to be at two complementary levels: the national and international levels.

At the national level, implementation is, as a matter of course, the primary responsibility of Governments, after determining their own national priorities. Successful implementation will, in the final analysis, be based upon careful consideration of the priority needs of each country. There cannot be a question of uniform implementation. National Governments, we believe, will have to come up with national programmes for action. These national programmes for action should, in our view, be the result of comprehensive consultations with institutions in the public, private and non-governmental sectors at the community, national, subregional, regional and international levels. These programmes should also

be integrated into national development plans if they are to have a meaningful effect on development.

At the international level, the role of the United Nations system as a whole will be indispensable in effective implementation. The United Nations will have to play a key role in consolidating the commitments entered into by Member States and the international community in Copenhagen.

This effort by the United Nations should include facilitating the early development of specific implementation strategies, including the establishment or improvement of national mechanisms and measures to integrate the social dimension into all policies and programmes. In this effort, the role of the Economic and Social Council and the Commission for Social Development will be of crucial importance.

In the Programme of Action of the Summit, the Economic and Social Council has been given the responsibility of overseeing system-wide coordination in the implementation of the Summit outcome and making recommendations in this regard. The Economic and Social Council has also been tasked to look at ways of strengthening its role, authority, structures, resources and processes, bringing specialized agencies into a closer working relationship with the Council. We agree that for effective implementation of the outcome of the Summit, a revitalized Economic and Social Council will have a major role to play.

We therefore look forward to the completion of consultations begun at the substantive session of the Economic and Social Council this year, in terms of reviewing the mandate, agenda and composition of the Commission for Social Development. We certainly agree that the Commission will need to be strengthened to bring it into line with other functional commissions.

In addressing the question of the mandate of the Commission for Social Development, a number of issues will have to be addressed. For instance, what is to be the precise role of the Commission *vis-à-vis* its relationship to the Economic and Social Council? Should the Commission be kept as an expert body or should it perhaps be an intergovernmental body with an enlarged membership? What, indeed, should be its membership, taking into account the need for geographical representation?

We would like to put forward our initial views with regard to some of the points that have been raised. We believe that the primary responsibility for implementation of the follow-up to the Summit should be vested in the Commission for Social Development. The Economic and Social Council would then assume the responsibility of providing overall guidance to the Commission and of making the recommendation to the General Assembly. We also believe that the Commission should be an intergovernmental body, as opposed to being an expert body. The Commission, as an intergovernmental body, would have to examine ways of opening up to civil society. In this regard, the Commission could come up with a suitable mechanism for necessary input from experts and expert bodies. We believe that dialogue with civil society on matters of social development is an absolute necessity.

We also feel that the possibility of holding a high-level segment of the Commission for Social Development should be given serious consideration. For the successful implementation of the outcome of the Summit, massive political will at the national and international levels will be required. A high-level segment would therefore serve the purpose of sustaining political interest at a high level and also foster the necessary link between national implementation and international efforts to facilitate implementation.

We would also like a mechanism for establishing semi-permanent dialogue with the Bretton Woods institutions to be put in place. The role of these institutions in social development cannot be overemphasized. Perhaps this dialogue could take place on an annual basis, during the high-level segment of the Commission for Social Development.

We are very mindful of the fact that issues of social development do not have an agency giving them specific focus in terms of implementation. We therefore wonder

whether it would not be beneficial to designate the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) as the lead agency in terms of implementation. The Commission for Social Development would then be the focal point in terms of intergovernmental policy direction. We believe that it is certainly within the General Assembly's mandate to effect these changes.

Having said that, it would perhaps be prudent to hold a high- level segment of the Commission during 1996 so that these and other issues could be discussed in a substantive manner in order that the General Assembly could take firm decisions at the fifty-first session.

We consider it important that a framework for international cooperation be developed in the context of An Agenda for Development in order to ensure the integrated and comprehensive implementation, follow-up and assessment of the outcome of the Summit. We shall, however, reserve our position in relation to the strengthening of the capacity of the system to support an integrated, effective follow-up to the Summit as part of the overall effort to ensure the coordinated implementation of the results of the series of recent conferences. We would like to see how these ideas develop and then assess how, in fact, they will facilitate implementation.

Let me conclude by saying that the success of the World Summit for Social Development will be determined by the extent to which the commitments made at Copenhagen are achieved. The goals of the Social Summit must therefore be given the highest priority, both now and into the twenty-first century.

Mr. Berrocal Soto (Costa Rica) (*interpretation from Spanish*): I shall begin by stating the obvious: the World Summit for Social Development, held in March of this year in the city of Copenhagen, constitutes one of the most important events of our times and is surely an authentic milestone in the history of the United Nations. In the future — and I am sure time will prove us right — people will talk about before Copenhagen and after.

Established in the Declaration and Programme of Action are the deep interrelation and the interdependence between the results of the Social Summit and the previous agreements of the World Summit for Children, held in New York in 1990, the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, and its Agenda 21, the World Conference on Human Rights, held in Vienna in 1993, the Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States, held in Barbados in 1994, and the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo in 1994. The World Conference on Women, held in Beijing in September 1995, constituted another ratification of that interlinkage and the scope of the conceptual and programmatic interrelation between the Copenhagen World Summit and all of those important earlier endeavours of the United Nations.

In this way, and because of the importance and intrinsic worth of the issues addressed and their substantive and programmatic scope, the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme Action — in particular, the 10 Commitments — have been taking shape and cohering like an all-encompassing umbrella that coordinates a process of fundamental definitions that, in the 1990s, from different thematic angles and action-oriented points of view, all place the issue of social development on the international agenda at the end of the twentieth century as a primary and essential theme. In this way the system and States Members of the United Nations have gained substantially, but it is the nations, men and women from all regions — North, South, East and West — that have gained the most.

More than 100 Presidents and Heads of States and Government — 117 to be precise — together reaffirmed and ratified in the city of Copenhagen an undeniable and imperative truth of our times. Now it is up to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, in its consideration of item 161 of the agenda, to take decisions and move ahead with determination and firmness in concrete and operational terms, to transform the concepts and commitments of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Social Summit into real and tangible deeds.

This should be done with the full and active cooperation of the United Nations system and its Member States, and as part of an effort which must be international and, at the same time, regional and national and must involve both the public and private sectors and the rest of civil society.

We cannot recognize the significance of this important process and, at the same time, the critical importance of the Social Summit without paying a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Juan Somavia of Chile, in his capacity as Chairman of the Preparatory Committee and Chairman of the Main Committee of the Copenhagen Summit. The fact that we are now celebrating the undeniable success of the United Nations and of its Member States is largely due to the extraordinary managerial and negotiating skills of Ambassador Somavia. Furthermore, we should recognize and pay tribute to the sense of commitment, the determination and the organizational capacity of the Government of Denmark and its authorities, a sense of commitment and a determination which, as we have seen subsequent to the Summit, go beyond the organization of the Social Summit itself and are reflected in its principal agreements and commitments. The Government of Denmark has officially announced that it intends to establish and give impetus to the work of an independent forum for promoting and monitoring implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action and, to that end, will make a considerable contribution of economic resources as part of an effort that should be shared by all Member States and by the system itself. That initiative, more than any words, reveals the determination and sense of commitment of the Government of Denmark.

It is also satisfying to note the efficient, expeditious and concerted manner in which the Secretariat of the United Nations has responded, as evidenced by the important operational decisions adopted at the last meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination on 12 and 13 October. The action of establishing three task forces to deal with implementation of the decisions of the Social Summit and a fourth task force related to the Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, with the participation of the various institutions and programmes of the United Nations system as a whole, including the Bretton Woods institutions, is a significant step forward of great importance deserving the recognition of this General Assembly.

In particular, I wish to highlight the World Bank's agreement to serve as lead agency for one of the task forces and the determination of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, Mr. Gustav Speth, that the international effort and the essential work that must be done regionally and nationally shall be given coherence and operational support through the broad network of resident coordinators in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean.

The link between the Bretton Woods institutions and the work of the other agencies and programmes of the United Nations system is vital and urgent. Thus, this decision of the World Bank to lead the work of one of the task forces — the task force on the enabling environment for sustainable development — is of the greatest importance. If there is no comprehensive solution to the problems of development finance, international trade, access to technology and the foreign debt of developing countries, the declarations and international agreements on social development will be worthless, well-intentioned though they may be. At the same time, and in consideration of this, our countries will have to work with firmness and resolve in carrying out far-reaching State reforms and modernizing judicial systems in order to make governability a political possibility and to enable our economies to compete in the interdependent and global international environment which is our world today.

By involving the World Bank and making it an active participant in this joint effort, we are taking a crucial step, not only in the direction of effectively implementing the agreements of the various summits and international conferences, but also in the reform and restructuring of the United Nations. Just as economic and social development are two sides of one coin, as was made plain in Copenhagen, so a united and concerted effort by the economic branch and the social and political

branches of the United Nations is a prerequisite for laying the foundations of international cooperation in the present and future.

In this regard, mention must also be made of similar work that is being carried out with immense vision and determination by the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Ahmad Kamal of Pakistan: the forging of operational and programmatic linkages between the Bretton Woods institutions and other agencies of the United Nations system. That is the right approach to take and it is in this same direction that we must continue to work during 1996.

The Social Summit demonstrated impressive ability of the United Nations to rally countries, non-governmental organizations and public opinion around one of the essential issues of our times. It further demonstrated, behind that enormous organizational effort and mobilization of human and intellectual resources, that a wealth of ideas and initiatives could be grouped under common objectives when the issues — even the most difficult and sensitive ones — are analysed and resolved from a comprehensive and harmonizing perspective.

Without renouncing positions of principle which, by their nature, are irrepudiable, the developing countries of the South managed to agree with the developed North, on a Declaration of principles and a Programme of Action which, only weeks after the Copenhagen meeting, became a true common platform and a meeting of the minds, as a basis on which to advance, in social as well as economic terms, towards a structure of international relations rooted in justice and equality between nations. This new spirit of conciliation, of honest and open negotiation, of assigning the proper perspective to the problems, is the new spirit with which we must face the other priority issues on the international agenda, including that of the reform and restructuring of the United Nations system.

By the will of all Member States, the General Assembly has declared 1996 the "International Year for the Eradication of Poverty". Commitment 1 of the Social Summit is precisely a reference to the eradication of absolute poverty and lays down that each country, acting sovereignly in its own context and in accordance with its own internal decision-making procedures, should, in the near future, set a year as a goal for the eradication of absolute poverty. That important definition at the national level should, in the view of my country, be established by Member States in 1996, as a way of demonstrating and making clear our determination to put into practice and fulfil the process which over the next years should lead to the fulfilment of the ten Copenhagen Commitments as an effective way to give content and meaning to the proclamation of the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty.

It would be regrettable indeed if 1996 were to pass without Member States having established, clearly and resolutely as a definition of this kind warrants, the target year by which absolute poverty should be eradicated from each country and without their having set up national coordinating mechanisms, involving the public sector and private organizations representing civil society, which, with the support of the United Nations system and regional and sub-regional organizations, will meet the challenge of fulfilling Commitment 1 of the Copenhagen Summit. This is a tangible and realistic objective. It would be a way of effectively moving from words to deeds and, as of 1996, transforming the results of the Social Summit into a movement across borders, with a view to eradicating from the face of the earth the disgrace and suffering of absolute poverty.

I therefore respectfully ask all delegations to consider this initiative shared by various Member States and transmit to their respective capitals this desire to make 1996 a decisive and momentous year in the fight against extreme poverty, thus taking a step towards the fulfilment of the first Commitment of the Social Summit while also establishing, in accordance with domestic decision-making machinery, the operational and programmatic bases for integrated progress, resulting from the combined efforts of all the forces and sectors of each nation's realities, towards the effective fulfilment of the 10 Commitments of the Social Summit. Costa Rica believes that this would be an objective and feasible goal, a realistic and concrete way to give real meaning to the

proclamation of 1996 as the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty.

If Member States make this the time to eradicate poverty and establish national mechanisms for coordination and collaboration for the fulfilment of the 10 Commitments of the Copenhagen Social Summit, if the United Nations system really organizes itself, and if its inter-agency and programmatic efforts link up in the way agreed at the most recent meeting of the Administrative Committee on Coordination, while including the Bretton Woods institutions in this joint effort, then we will have more than enough reason to be optimistic and to believe that a special session of the General Assembly in the year 2000 could be successfully devoted to evaluating the results of the implementation of the agreements of the Declaration and Programme of Action of the Copenhagen Social Summit, and even of the work we have done in the context of the other international Conferences and Summits that have taken place since 1990. This would be an exceptional opportunity to assess economic and social progress in the final decade of the twentieth century and to redefine goals for the twenty-first century.

After the Social Summit and the Fourth World Conference on Women this year, 1995, and the solemn declarations on the occasion of the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations last October, 1996 presents itself as a year of important decisions, a year to move from declarations to concrete action, a year for each Member State to establish a target date for the eradication of extreme poverty, a year to begin to move firmly and resolutely towards that special session of the General Assembly in the year 2000.

Mrs. Msuya (United Republic of Tanzania): At the outset, my delegation wishes to convey its sincere appreciation to Ambassador Juan Somavía for the sterling role he played in making the World Summit for Social Development a success. Likewise, our profound gratitude goes to the people and the Government of Denmark for hosting the Summit.

My delegation endorses the statement made by the Permanent Representative of the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China. We commend the Secretary-General for his report on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, contained in document A/50/670.

In addressing the three issues of poverty eradication, the expansion of productive employment, and the enhancement of social integration at the World Summit for Social Development, the international community has taken a vital step towards the resolve

> "to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,"

as expressed in the preamble to the United Nations Charter.

The World Summit for Social Development has generated a lot of interest in many circles. One of the major commitments made in Copenhagen by both developed and developing countries is to eradicate poverty. For the commitment to be of any meaning, it has to be translated into action. In the context of my country, the United Republic of Tanzania, the imperative is to expand productive employment, which is the primary basis for the people to improve their living standard. At Copenhagen, due emphasis was placed on the importance of the participation of women and civil society in the quest for social development. Indeed, the Programme of Action provides for action by individuals, Governments and the international community, in both the public and private sectors.

One of the central challenges for Governments is to give practical meaning to the vision of people-centred development. Tanzania, despite its limited capacities, has been implementing that philosophy for the last 30 years. There have been notable successes and some problems. One important lesson we have learned is that national Governments cannot be the only players. Deliberate measures are necessary to ensure that civil society is empowered to participate in economic and social decision-making processes. No effective agenda for social or economic development can succeed without addressing

the basic needs of the people. And the people have to be involved. There is plenty of empirical evidence that where they are involved very tangible results are realized both for their well-being and for that of the State.

The follow-up to Copenhagen will necessitate the prompt formulation and implementation of time-bound poverty-eradication strategies, the orientation of national budgets to meet these requirements and means for measuring the impact of national initiatives. In the case of Tanzania, agriculture will be the main target for involving the majority of our people. Investments in that sector are key to the success of the programme.

Equal rights and opportunities for all are a prerequisite for genuine development. Social integration therefore should not be seen in terms of human rights and justice alone, but in terms of a broader sense of cohesion. To reduce inequalities among people and narrow the gap between developed and developing countries, the active participation of all players is crucial.

While it is the primary responsibility of States to attain the goals identified at the Summit, these goals will be achieved by States through a broad partnership with the international community through the United Nations. In other words, many players have to be actively involved, such as international financial institutions, regional organizations, local authorities and all actors of civil society.

The Programme of Action includes recommendations on the role of the specialized agencies and, in particular, the Bretton Woods institutions in the mobilization of financial resources for social development. It is encouraging to note that with regard to debt reduction, and on the basis of decisions taken during the course of 1994 by seven major industrialized countries, the governors of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), international financial institutions are invited to explore ways of adopting additional and innovative measures to alleviate the debt burden of developing and low-income countries. The resources of the Debt Reduction Facility of the International Development Association ought to be utilized. Likewise, alternative mechanisms to complement that facility ought to be considered.

Specialized agencies and international financial institutions have a critical role to play in order to gear structural-adjustment programmes towards the objectives of social development, as recommended in Commitment 8 of the Declaration of the Summit. In most African countries these programmes have had negative effects on social development. Therefore, Governments should be assisted in protecting basic social programmes and expenditures already under way.

My delegation is encouraged by the concurrence of the Administrative Committee on Coordination with the proposal that coordinated support for country-level action should be organized around the interrelated themes of the enabling environment for social and economic development, employment and a sustainable livelihood and basic social services for all. These themes are especially relevant to a concerted attack on poverty, which constitutes a major priority objective underlying major conferences.

My delegation welcomes the arrangement for pursuing these themes in setting up task forces for follow-up, whereby the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), the World Bank and the International Labour Organization, respectively, will act as lead agencies in addressing those themes. Pursuant to the Platform for Action adopted in Beijing last September, it will be vital to take full account of the gender dimension in the work of each of the thematic task forces.

The efforts of national Governments, specialized agencies and financial institutions in the implementation of the Programme of Action should be complemented by a willingness on the part of developed countries to take more concrete action on debt reduction, especially for African countries, in line with Commitment 6 of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. The 20/20 compact, which is seen as a novel way to reorient resources towards social development, is an initiative that should be pursued. Developed and developing countries may wish to consider how to propel this agreement

forward, especially with regard to methodological and conceptual standardization.

Mr. Minoves-Triquell (Andorra) (*interpretation from French*): How can poverty be avoided? The Copenhagen Summit last March afforded us an opportunity to give some thought to that question. It brought many of us together to prepare the ground for the eventual eradication of underdevelopment, poverty and social fragmentation. It is true that many experts underestimated the importance of the Summit. The meeting was criticized — accused of a lack of realism — and sometimes even ignored as a bureaucratic exercise in futility, carried out by idealists and having no future.

That, however, is not true. Underlying the Copenhagen effort were a deep sense of concern and a very tangible determination to attack the problem of underdevelopment. And now there is a definitive text proclaiming loud and clear the international community's commitments in that respect: the Copenhagen Declaration. I am among those who believe that texts, writings and words are powerful tools in the hands of humanity. Sometimes acts precede words, it is true; sometimes it is the reverse. Here, in what concerns us today, we have a text that has been accepted by the United Nations. It is neither the best nor the worst, but it is a tool that expresses a vision of the objective of development — that we must translate into action.

We, the representatives of our States to the United Nations, must be conscious, five years before the year 2000, of the enormous responsibility on our shoulders. Modestly but surely, we can help ensure that the words we have written in New York, Rio, Copenhagen and Beijing lead to something: action on behalf of development and peace. And if a few members of the human species benefit therefrom, that will be our little contribution to humanity. Perhaps it is the impending holiday season that has inspired my beneficence; nevertheless, it goes without saying that without our active involvement the Copenhagen Declaration will have no effect.

What can we do? Briefly, at the Andorran Mission we intend to concentrate our efforts — as our Head of Government, Minister for Foreign Affairs and I myself have said on several occasions — on the implementation of paragraph (h) of Commitment 4 of the Declaration, which Andorra composed and which, if I may, I should like to recall here:

> "The Heads of State and Government will encourage the contribution of people of all age groups as equally and vitally important for the building of a harmonious society, and foster dialogue between generations in all parts of society". (*A/CONF.166/9, p. 16*)

I am strongly determined to see us engaged in a debate and in programmes of action targeting unemployment among the young and their social integration. This is a matter of exceptional urgency, since it has been estimated that in this decade the developing countries will require the creation of 260 million new jobs.

Similarly, how are we going to deal with the question of ageing? Since human beings now live longer, we must be prepared to guarantee them a dignified old age, both respectable and respected by promoting solidarity between generations. The General Assembly's decision to proclaim 1999 the International Year of Older Persons gives us an excellent opportunity to consider this subject.

It will take more than pretty words to implement the Copenhagen Declaration. We will all have to devote ourselves to developing in close cooperation most of the points we endorsed a few months ago, because in the end, poverty and lack of social integration among men, women and children in the third millennium will only reflect the spiritual poverty of those who came before. Since we are capable of changing the world, let us not leave it unchanged.

Mr. Husaraka (Namibia): The delegation of Namibia would like, first and foremost, to pay a well-deserved tribute to Ambassador Somavía of Chile for his vision and his belief in the capacity of man to do what is good. He never wavered in this vision.

At the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen in March this year, the President of the Republic of Namibia, His Excellency Mr. Sam Nujoma, said:

> "We in Namibia after our victory over apartheid realized that the struggle for the attainment of our nationhood was not complete until we had overcome poverty, ignorance, disease, unemployment and social disintegration. And with vigour and commitment, as in our first struggle, we have fully committed ourselves to the second struggle against these evils. Today, Namibia appropriates almost half of her annual budget to education and health. But even then the battle is far from being won. It is, however, a battle the Namibian people had decreed in their Constitution to fight to the end and to overcome."

This represents the commitment of the Namibian Government to fully implement the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action.

At this juncture I must endorse the statement made here by the Ambassador of the Philippines on behalf of the Group of 77 and China.

It is the view of the Government of the Republic of Namibia that the primary responsibility for the full implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action lies with the Member States. In this respect, immediately after the Social Summit the Namibian National Preparatory Committee for the World Summit for Social Development was transformed into an implementing and monitoring Committee. Furthermore, measures to establish regional task force groups empowered to fully involve the local communities in the policy-formulation and decision-making process on all political and social issues were also envisaged.

The Namibia National Committee for the implementation and monitoring of the outcome of the Social Summit has wide powers and functions. It is empowered to, *inter alia*, first, provide direction, establish policy and oversee the overall execution of programmes; secondly, resolve policy issues and problems identified at the programme component level; thirdly, ensure the integration of programme activities in development planning efforts of the Government; and, fourthly, liaise with other relevant bodies in the country, particularly those involved in the fight against poverty, unemployment and social disintegration.

Furthermore, we have just completed Namibia's First National Development Plan, for the period 1995 to 2000, into which our poverty-reduction efforts have been integrated. The main objectives of this Plan are: to revive and sustain economic growth; to create employment opportunities; to reduce inequalities in income distribution; and to eradicate poverty. In order to tackle the problems of poverty eradication, Namibia's First National Development Plan sets out a national framework to significantly reduce poverty in the short-to-medium term.

The First National Development Plan provides that — through accelerating economic growth — a reduction in inequality between various segments of our society, employment generation and specific programmes targeted at poverty alleviation will be integrated naturally into the implementation of the outcome of the Social Summit.

It is to be expected that, as with any developing country, one of the elements underlying poverty in Namibia is the environmental factor. Then, in our special case, there are the legacies of apartheid: educational differences; lack of access to land; lack of access to financial resources; unequal access to social services; and a constraining legal framework.

To eliminate these constraints on poverty alleviation, Government expenditure on health was increased from 14.5 per cent in 1990-91 to 15.7 per cent in 1994-95. In real terms, the increase over that period was more than 10 per cent. Efforts are being made to extend health services to the majority of the population and to redress the inequalities of the pre-independence health system, which was extremely biased in favour of the minority white population. Today our slogan is "Health for all Namibians by the year 2000".

In the field of education in Namibia, there was similar skewing, in terms of both quantity and quality, in favour of the minority whites. In 1993, education expenditure accounted for 25.3 per cent of the Government budget. The figure is expected to rise to 33 per cent in the 1995-96 financial year. Primary education accounts for over 50 per cent of education spending. Furthermore, there has been a rapid increase in enrolment; the rate rose from 60 per cent in 1990 to 83.5 per cent in 1993.

However, poverty remains prevalent in our society, despite commendable progress in the areas of health, education and food security.

I should like at this juncture to congratulate the Secretary-General on his interim report (A/50/84) on the world social situation and his report (A/50/670) on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development, which are complementary. The Namibian delegation concurs with the Secretary-General's proposal that a special session be convened in the year 2000 for an overall review and appraisal of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development. As the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Namibia stated this year during the general debate, the time has come to digest what we have decided at all the major world summits and conferences.

My delegation would thus welcome the operational format envisaged by the Secretary-General, with the establishment through the Administrative Committee on Coordination of three interagency task forces: on basic social services for all, with the United Nations Population Fund as lead agency; on income generation for the poor and the attainment of full employment and sustainable livelihoods, with the International Labour Organization as lead agency; and on an enabling environment for sustainable human development, with the World Bank as lead agency.

My delegation would therefore wish to emphasize that, in this highly globalized world, a coordinated approach to the outcome of all these major conferences will contribute significantly to bringing greater coherence and integration to the work of the United Nations.

Equally, it is important that the Commission for Social Development, as the functional commission responsible for the monitoring and implementation within the United Nations system of the Programme of Action, should be provided with sufficient resources to enable it to ensure effective follow-up to the social Summit.

My delegation remains optimistic that, by the time of the review in the year 2000, the world will have reached a level where the most basic right of life, that is, the right to remain human, has been achieved.

Mr. Bergh (South Africa): The President of the Republic of South Africa, Mr. Nelson Mandela, stated in Copenhagen in March this year that it was his profound wish that the United Nations World Summit for Social Development would go down in history as one which had made a difference to the quality of life for millions around the world. He also said that

> "Humility, induced by the heavy responsibility which rests upon all of us, demands that we not postpone the decisions and concrete programmes which will set us on a path which sees the world transformed into a better home for all".

In line with this call by President Mandela, my Government has embarked on a process of fundamentally reforming the welfare system of South Africa through the development of a new policy and strategy, set out in a draft White Paper. With this, South Africa has taken up the challenge of making welfare a tool of national social development and ending its popular image of "handouts" and of creating dependency. This policy is in accordance with the approach and priorities of our Reconstruction and Development Programme, the Constitution of South Africa and the commitments that Governments made at the World Summit for Social Development.

This new policy document cites key substantive issues in the restructuring of social welfare services, developmental programmes and societal security. The document firmly commits our Goverament of National Unity to the development of an equitable, people-centred, democratic and sustainable welfare system. The new

welfare system will facilitate the development of human capacity, self-reliance and the promotion of social well-being. It will create an enabling socio-economic environment, needed to assist people to become self-reliant. The goals contained in the document were set by the broad welfare community after one of the most extensive programmes of consultation ever undertaken by a South African Government department. Apart from the 150 national organizations participating, there were also some 600 submissions received, most of which were integrated into the draft White Paper.

The South African Department of Welfare and Population Development has already started work on a five-year strategic plan which will enable the country to reach the goals set out in the draft White Paper. The plan will target the 40 per cent of our population who are the poorest and the most in need of social assistance, as well as those people who are vulnerable and at risk. Its priorities will include the following: a national plan of action for families, children and youth, and programmes for the prevention, alleviation and reduction of poverty, counteracting the abuse of women and empowering them economically, fighting drug and alcohol abuse, addressing the impact of chronic illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, and promoting the rights of people with physical and mental disabilities.

The way to achieve these goals will be through family-centred and community-based care and rehabilitation programmes. Development welfare programmes will be implemented by enabling communities to take up the challenge of entering into partnership with Government to meet basic needs at the local level. People in need will be cared for in their own communities, and institutional care will be used only as a last resort, where appropriate.

The ending of racial and geographic disparities in services and facilities funded by the Government is a priority. To this end, a representative committee has been appointed to develop a plan of action to reprioritize welfare programmes and to phase out any inequities that may still exist. This committee will also advise the Minister of Welfare and Population Development on financing criteria for institutions and community services, including time frames, targets, performance indicators and a changed management plan.

The Government believes it has the responsibility to deliver services and social programmes on a large scale, as it has the mandate, resources and infrastructure to do so. Organizations in civil society are, however, well placed to address local needs and to innovate and pioneer new services which, if successful, could be replicated on a wider scale.

Non-governmental organizations have an important partnership role to play with the South African Government in policy development, in direct service delivery, in facilitating development, in advocacy, and in ensuring the accountability of the Government. The partnership between Government, civil society and the private sector will therefore be strengthened.

Policies and programmes will be developed through the collaboration of governmental and non-governmental sectors to pool resources and make the maximum impact on poverty alleviation and reduction. There are approximately 10,000 social service and development non-governmental organizations in South Africa. In future all non-governmental organizations will be accorded the same status, with the same rights and responsibilities.

My Government has, as a direct follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, declared war on poverty. To this end, social welfare policies and programmes will be developed to target the prevention, alleviation and reduction of poverty. Furthermore the capacity of the people to take charge of their own circumstances in a meaningful way will also be developed.

As this project has just been launched, my Government hopes to offer more detailed input on this during the thirty-fifth session of the Commission for Social Development.

Mr. Dlamini (Swaziland): My delegation appreciates the report (A/50/670) of the Secretary-General on the implementation of the outcome

of the World Summit for Social Development and the report (A/CONF.166/9) of the World Summit for Social Development held in Copenhagen in March 1995.

When His Majesty King Mswati III joined other world leaders at the Summit he committed the Kingdom of Swaziland to strive against poverty and for a goal of full employment and the fostering of a safe and just society. Today we reaffirm our commitment.

The implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development is a serious task. In addition to political commitments, it requires a review of economic policies and mobilization of new and additional financial resources. It also requires cooperation at regional and international levels and assistance from partners in development and United Nations agencies for its full implementation.

The Secretary-General recalls in his report that the Summit addressed issues of universal relevance. The three main issues of poverty eradication, unemployment and social integration, including the 10 Commitments, cut across the responsibilities of national government machineries and the mandates of different organizations within the system. Participation and responsibilities of the private sector, the media, non-governmental organizations and civil society are regarded by my delegation as very important in the implementation of the outcome of the Copenhagen Summit.

The strengthening of community organizations and non-profit, non-governmental organizations in the spheres of education, health, poverty, social integration, human rights and other areas emphasizes the need to support and encourage the development of such organizations, particularly among the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups.

My delegation firmly believes that the Summit provided a landmark for a people-centred strategy for sustainable development. The involvement of all groups of people in development means that there is a move towards productivity, equality, sustainability and empowerment. Gender issues need to be addressed as development issues and as human rights concerns. We acknowledge that it is only when the potential of human beings is fully realized that we can talk of true development in a society of human beings. We cannot, therefore, ignore the fact that women play a major role in development and peace, and, as such, it is vital that efforts by women should be incorporated in our national strategies, as adopted in the Beijing Platform for Action recently.

It is equally important to integrate the participation of youth, especially the girl-child, in the development process. At the Summit it was indicated that, with an increasing population, the number of youth living in poverty will increase significantly and specific measures are needed to address this. Access to training, education and employment services to protect children and youth is essential. At this point, I should like to refer to His Majesty's statement at the recent Commemorative Meeting on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, when he spoke of youth

> "whose expectations and hopes ... for the future of mankind must form the focus for the United Nations in the next 50 years." *(Official Records of the General Assembly, Fiftieth Session, Plenary Meetings, 38th meeting, pp. 1-2)*

They are future actors in all aspects of societies, and we should secure their future today. If not by developing their minds and equipping them with skills, then how else can their future be secured?

I now wish to focus on Africa. At the beginning of this year, Africa's debt stock still presented a gloomy picture. One of Africa's main problems in development is its persistent external debt burden, which in most cases exceeds a country's development problem. It is in this regard that we should remind this Assembly of the commitment made by all our Heads of State and Government to

> "establish a more favourable climate for trade and investment, give priority to human resource development" *(A/CONF.166/9, Commitment 7, para. (a))*

and to

> "Support the domestic efforts of Africa and the least developed countries to implement economic reforms, programmes to increase food security, and commodity diversification efforts through international cooperation, including South-South cooperation and technical and financial assistance, as well as trade and partnership". (*ibid., para. (b)*)

Swaziland believes that for development to take place there should be an enabling environment for people's empowerment and the building up of people's capacities for self-reliance. It is thus essential that even the system of governance should be all-inclusive and more participatory in decision-making. It is for this reason that Swaziland believes that true democracy should not refer only to political party executives and academics; rather, it should embrace the entire populace of the country.

Focusing on my own country, I wish to add that our 27 years of independence have seen remarkable economic progress and transformation. However, the bulk of the Swazi people are still largely outside the mainstream of economic activity. It was in the light of this that His Majesty King Mswati III commissioned the gathering of views from the entire Swazi populace at all levels.

The Economic Review Commission recently recommended that employment creation and the provision of economic opportunities should receive the highest priority in Swaziland. Furthermore, the Commission was convinced, on the basis of the submissions of Swazis at all levels, that higher living standards for all must be based on more productive work for all. This will entail an expanded role of the private sector, including provision of special measures to stimulate the development of local entrepreneurs.

Of equal importance will be recognition of the fact that women are the backbone of the economy. It is therefore necessary to remove all the obstacles that prevent women from playing a bigger role in the economy.

His Majesty has taken the lead in implementing the recommendations of that Commission. On 17 November 1995 His Majesty launched a small- and medium-enterprise support scheme for unemployed people, including pensioners. A share of the funds to establish the scheme was donated by friendly nations, and we appreciate such gestures.

A beginning was made at Copenhagen, with a summation of all views expressed there and at other United Nations conferences, and with an eye to future conferences. Now it is time to move forward and implement all those ideals and hopes for the future inhabitants of this planet, to whom we owe so much and to whom we should give an account of what the United Nations has done for their nations. Swaziland is still working on a framework for international cooperation, in the context of the Agenda for Development, in order to ensure the integrated and comprehensive implementation, follow-up and assessment of the outcome of the Summit, together with the results of the other United Nations conferences on social development, including the upcoming United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II).

In addition to national efforts, Swaziland will participate relentlessly at, *inter alia*, the Southern African Development Community and Organization of African Unity levels, and, of course, at the United Nations level whenever an opportunity to share views concerning this subject presents itself.

Programme of Work

The Acting President: I should like to clarify the programme of work of the General Assembly for tomorrow.

Tomorrow morning, the Assembly will first take up agenda item 21, "University for Peace", for the purpose of taking action on draft resolution A/50/L.42/Rev.1, which has been distributed in the General Assembly Hall. The Assembly will next continue its consideration of agenda item 161, "Implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development".

Also tomorrow, the Assembly will consider agenda item 165, "Implementation of the outcome of the Fourth World Conference on Women: Action for Equality, Development and Peace", after the conclusion of the debate on agenda item 161.

The meeting rose at 6.05 p.m.